

THE REASONS OF OUR LORD'S AGONY
IN THE GARDEN, AND THE INFLUENCE
OF JUST VIEWS OF THEM
ON UNIVERSAL HOLINESS,

IN A

S E R M O N.

BY

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KILMARNOCK:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON.

M,DCC,LXXXVII.

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1871

S E R M O N.

MATTH. XXVI, 38.

*Then saith he unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful,
even unto death.*

THIS is a most interesting passage of our LORD's History, the proper illustration of which will, I hope, by the divine influence, contribute, in some degree, towards the awakening of sinners, and the edification of the body of CHRIST.

IN order to collect and arrange our thoughts upon a Subject of such vast importance, we propose, in a humble dependance upon divine grace,

I. To refute the false reasons which have been assigned of our LORD's agony in the Garden:

II. To ascertain and illustrate the true reasons of that agony:

III. To point out the influence of this important Doctrine upon universal holiness:

IV. To conclude with a few Inferences from what shall be delivered,

WE begin with an humble attempt, through divine grace, to refute the false reasons of our LORD's

agony in the garden. On this part of the subject, we shall study all the brevity and perspicuity of which we are capable.

I SHOULD think it highly improper, from this place, to engage your attention with any thing of a controversial nature, did not the truth controverted lie at the very foundation of Christianity, and had not the controversy about this truth been lately revived in our neighbourhood. Peculiar circumstances will undoubtedly justify a conduct which otherwise would be highly unjustifiable. Therefore, without any farther apology, I proceed to refute the false reasons of our LORD's agony in the garden, which have been assigned by men who either understood not the doctrine of our LORD's atonement, or else were inimical to it.

THOSE of the ancients who entertained erroneous ideas upon this important point of Christian doctrine, ascribed the agony of our LORD in the garden to different causes. Hilary, * bishop of Poitiers in France, who flourished in the 4th Century, and wrote twelve books against the Arians, represented our LORD's distress on this occasion, as arising from the *previous knowledge* he had of the flight and dispersion of his Disciples. He is said to have eluded the true cause of our SAVIOUR's sufferings, in order the more effectually to combat the arguments of the Arians. For they urged, that if JESUS CHRIST were the true and eternal God, as the Orthodox alledged, it was impossible that the human

* Hilar. c. 21. in Matth. Dominus non timuit propter se, sed propter Discipulos quos prævidebat fugituros et negaturos.

nature, which he had assumed into personal union with himself, could be susceptible of suffering. A poor reason indeed for imbibing such a grossly heretical opinion, and originating in the blindness of the human mind.

JEROM, a Monk of Palestine, who lived in the same century, attributed the distress of our LORD in the garden, to his infallible prescience of Judas's treachery and melancholy exit; to his certain foresight of the unparalleled sin and awful catastrophe of the Jews: for these causes were combined by him, and urged in support of his hypothesis. But the wiser and more judicious of the Fathers, Ambrose, Augustine and Athanasius, reprobated, with indignation, this Doctrine; and maintained, upon solid principles, the true reasons of our LORD's agony in the garden.

THE opinions of Hilary and Jerom have been often adopted and retailed by modern Writers, as if they themselves had been the inventors of them. However, a little attention will convince any man, that they are totally destitute of all solid foundation. It is absurd to suppose that the flight and dispersion of the Disciples should form such a source of deep distress to our LORD. We shall allow that, as *Man*, he was tenderly affected with the ungrateful conduct of the Disciples, in forsaking him in the hour of danger; but the foresight of this will by no means account for his deep anguish of soul. He knew that what on their part would manifest *human weakness*, would also illustrate the *glorious execution* of his wonderful undertaking, in-

dependent of all human aid. In his Intercessory Prayer, he had committed his Disciples to the guardianship of his heavenly Father *; and, doubtless, he was assured that the important trust was as safe as Omnipotence could make it. Hence, with a mind placid and serene, he foretels, that they should be convened again after his resurrection, and meet with him in their native country of Galilee. Read, for the illustration of this sentiment, the words of our LORD, recorded by the Evangelist Matthew. “ Then JESUS saith unto
 “ them, All ye shall be offended because of me
 “ this night: for it is written, I will smite the
 “ Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered a
 “ broad. But after I am risen again, I will go be
 “ fore you into Galilee.” †

NEITHER could his present distress arise from the infallible knowledge he had of the unparalleled sin, and consequent tremendous misery of the Jews. For we find him praying earnestly, that, if it were possible, the cup now put into his hands might pass from him. Whereas, he never prayed to his Father, that the Jews might be kept from crucifying him; and consequently, from the commission of that atrocious sin, which entailed indelible infamy on their nation; and involved them in a punishment, the most unexampled that ever was inflicted on any people since the foundation of the world. But how does that appear? Why, if he had prayed to his heavenly Father to prevent their commission of the horrid crime in put,

* John xvii. 11. † Matth. xxvi. 31, 32.

ting him to an ignominious death, his Father would undoubtedly have heard him. For our LORD bears this illustrious testimony to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always." * Neither is it any objection to this assertion, that he is here represented as praying three different times for the removal of that cup which he afterwards completely drank off. For though, as *Man*, he knew that Divine wrath was to be born by him in the name of the Redeemed, yet, as *Man*, he could not possibly know the *extent* of that wrath. But this will be afterwards more fully illustrated.

I WILL not here urge, in the farther refutation of this idea, that, as GOD, he had decreed to *per-*
mit the dreadful wickedness of the Jews, in hanging him on a tree, and awfully to punish them on the account of it. It is sufficient for my present argument to observe, that he had predicted that punishment without any apparent emotion. † We find him indeed, on one occasion, weeping over the city Jerusalem, and saying, "If thou, even
" thou, hadst known in this thy day, the things
" which belong to thy peace; but now they are
" hid from thine eyes." ‡ But surely we are not to consider our LORD at that time, as praying for a reversal of the eternal councils of Heaven, concerning the present and future fate of the Jews. We are only to view that pathetic exclamation, as a demonstration of his possessing the sensibilities and passions of a true man; as a proof of his deep

* John xi. 42. † Matth. xxiv. ‡ Luke xix. 41, 42.

concern, as man, for the salvation of immortal souls; and, as an evidence of the holy indignation with which his soul was filled at every sin; particularly at the most atrocious of all sins, the sin of rejecting an offered Saviour, and Salvation by him.

THERE is as little force in that reason, which represents our SAVIOUR's agony, as arising from the infallible knowledge he had of Judas's apostacy and melancholy fate. For he had, while celebrating the last passover with his Disciples, marked out Judas as the Traitor, by giving him the sop after he had dipped it; and added, on that occasion, "The Son of Man goeth, as it is written of him; but wo to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man, if he had never been born." * Nay, after the celebration of the first Supper, as the Disciples were either in the guest-chamber, or else travelling towards the garden of Gethsamene, our LORD preferred his Intercessory Prayer to his heavenly Father; and in that Prayer, he represents Judas as the Son of perdition, who was about to commit that horrid crime, and to experience the consequent tremendous misery which had been predicted in ancient Writ. †

OTHERS of the ancients ascribed the agony of our LORD in the garden, to the certain knowledge he had of that cruel and ignominious death, which, in the course of a few hours, he was to suffer.

* Matth. xxvi. 24. Mark xiv. 21. John xiii. 26. † Psal. cix. 8. John 17. 12.

This idea hath, with great avidity, been embraced by the Papists, who join with the Socinians in asserting, that our LORD endured no torments in his soul, nor even experienced any painful sensations, except such as arose from a sympathy and condolence with his body, as a material part of his human frame. But to suppose that the apprehension of a cruel and ignominious death would have so deeply affected the Son of God, is, to represent him as far inferior in Christian courage and magnanimity, to thousands and ten thousands of the Martyrs, who, with invincible boldness and intrepidity, have met death in all it's awful forms; and triumphed over the very appearance of every evil, which the combined influence of earth and hell could inflict.

A GROSS and offensive, perhaps a singular hypothesis has been lately advanced, that the great anxiety felt by our LORD in the garden, 'arose, 'in part, from an apprehensiveness about the difficulty of maintaining a becoming temper and 'deportment, under such unexperienced and awful trials as did now present themselves to him.' Here is a plain denial of the true, proper, and supreme Deity of the Son of God. For if he were indeed the fellow and equal of the ALMIGHTY, his human nature, from the first moment of it's union with the divine, was infallibly secured from sin of every kind and of every degree. But, as if this were not a sufficient indication of this Gentleman's sentiments upon this point, the same Writer *indecently* talks of the mutual struggle of

reason and passion in JESUS; from which he acknowledges, the victory of reason derived the greater value. After this, it is less surprising he should add, 'The bodily frame, and the state of the animal spirits, have necessarily, in this life, a great influence on the present temper of the mind. There are times when nothing appears hard or difficult to us; there are other times, when small difficulties appear insurmountable. This is one of the innocent infirmities of human nature. If the body be in a weak and exhausted state, the mind is more apt to be depressed in the view of any great danger or affliction. Something of this kind may have concurred, with other circumstances, to occasion our SAVIOUR'S agony in the garden.'

THESE words shew deep ignorance of the true character of JESUS CHRIST, and of his design in coming into the world. The character of the SAVIOUR, as here drawn, is similar to that of the guilty polluted creatures, whom he came to redeem; and who, in consequence of transgression, are subjected to fatigue and weariness of body, nay, to deep depression of mind. Does this Gentleman believe that these are innocent infirmities, which Adam, though he had never fallen, would have experienced? The idea is as *unphilosophical* as it is *unscriptural*. Doth not reason give this plain decision, that, where there is no sin, there cannot exist the smallest degree of sorrow? Of consequence, weakness of body, and depression of mind, are the effects of transgression. And though our

LORD actually experienced these effects of our sin, yet the reason was, that he came into this world to bear *the curse*. For if he had not been considered as *under the curse*, no weariness of body, no dejection of mind, which were the concomitants of that curse, could have ever, in the smallest degree, been experimentally known by him.

THE same Writer insinuates, that our LORD's agony in the garden might, in part, arise from 'the uncommon delicacy both of his body and mind.' What strange shifts do the adversaries of the doctrine of Atonement fall upon, in order to destroy the true foundation of a sinner's hope? We shall allow that our LORD possessed very uncommon delicacy of body and mind; but this only serves to show, that all his distresses, throughout the whole of life, were exceedingly heightened by this circumstance. Will any one venture to say, that he had a more delicate frame in the garden, than when sitting with the Disciples at the celebration of the last Passover, or throughout the former periods of life? But say Socinians, the prospect of his sufferings was now nearer. Surely they were not much nearer than when he was in the guest-chamber with his Disciples scarcely an hour before. Besides, it is absurd to reason here from the prospect of his sufferings; for that prospect was presented to him all along in the preceding part of his life. Hence we find him intimating to his Disciples in Galilee, "The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of

“men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.” *

* Matth. 17. 22.

How low is our Church brought, when such doctrine is tolerated in one of her Members! And how inconsistent with every idea of *honesty* is the Publication of such doctrine by one, who, at his Ordination, expressed his approbation of the Confession of Faith of this Church; nay, declared it to be the Confession of his Faith? But should he say, it becomes every man of *liberality* of *sentiment*, to search the Scriptures for himself; and to alter his sentiments, upon seeing things in a new light. This will not be disputed. But ought it not also to be allowed, in fair reasoning, that, as he acquired a title to his stipend as a Minister of the established Church, by declaring his approbation of the Confession of Faith, and promising to teach the doctrines of that Confession to his hearers, the moment he disbelieves these doctrines, that alteration of his religious sentiments should, in all *honesty*, have been accompanied with a resignation of his living? Have not some Ministers of late, who were connected with the established Churches of Scotland and England, set him a proper and living example of *integrity* in this respect? Upon renouncing the doctrines of the Standards of these Churches, they immediately resigned their worldly livings, and formed new connections with particular Societies of their own sentiments. By the observance of this line of conduct, they convinced the world, that nothing but scrupulosity of Conscience could ever have induced them to depart from their Ordination-vows. And though they might be mistaken in their new views, yet till such a mistake was rectified, it was undoubtedly more *honest* in them to leave the original Society, after renouncing its avowed doctrines, than to remain in connection with it, while all their endeavours were bent to destroy those very doctrines, which, at their Ordination, they had solemnly and publicly sworn to maintain to the utmost of their power.

HAVING thus refuted those reasons which may justly be styled false reasons of our LORD's agony, let us now proceed to ascertain and illustrate the true reasons of that agony.

WE confess that this is a part of the subject, of which we can have no *adequate conceptions*. It is revealed to our faith, but it is not explained to our reason. However, the doctrine itself is very clearly and fully taught in the new Testament; though, very probably, it is one of those mysterious doctrines, which will remain incomprehensible to finite minds, even throughout eternity. Let us begin with reading the expressions which the Spirit of God employs for conveying to us an idea of this doctrine. The very words of the text are extremely remarkable. The Son of God is introduced as saying, *My soul is sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* There is no mention here of his bodily sufferings. However severe these were, particularly in the concluding scene of life, our LORD never spake of them in the most distant manner. They were infinitely inferior to the sufferings of his soul; and therefore, these latter seem, as it were, to have engrossed his thoughts. Hence he says, "My soul is sorrowful." And in the verse immediately preceding the text, we are told, "Jesus *began* to be sorrowful and very heavy;" as if his sorrow had never begun till this period, so inconceivably superior to any thing he had formerly experienced was the influx of sorrow which was *now* poured into his holy soul. Another Evangelist says,

that now "he *began* to be fore amazed and very " heavy." * From these, and similar expressions, we may fairly conclude, that the

First reason of that agonizing pain which was now experienced by our LORD, arose from the *light of his Father's countenance being withdrawn from him.* This was evidently included in that death now endured by our LORD. For he could not, with any propriety, say "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," had he continued in the uninterrupted enjoyment of the *light of his Father's countenance.* Does not the *life of the soul*, according to the declaration of the Spirit of God, † consist in the *Divine favour*; of consequence, the *death of the soul* necessarily supposes a *suspension* of that favour. This suspension, indeed, could only be temporary with regard to JESUS CHRIST. Is it possible, by the force of wire-drawing criticism, to resist the evidence which here presents itself to the minds of impartial and unbiassed readers? But then the illustration of this reason ought to be conducted with a great degree of caution; lest, by taking any improper step, we should expose ourselves to the attacks of hostile invaders. We will readily confess that JESUS CHRIST did not, nay could not, call in question his relation to God as his Father. He knew in the lowest depths of his distress, that God was his Father, and that he was his Son by eternal generation; a Son possessing the same divine nature and perfections with the Father. As man, he

* Mark xiv. 33. † Psal. xxx. 5.

even knew his relation to God in consequence of the personal union; and maintained the faith of that relation firm and unshaken, under the most overwhelming distresses. And if we consider him in his mediatorial character, he never doubted at any time, nor under any situation, of the final success of his undertaking. Speaking upon this subject in ancient prophecy, we find him employing the language of a triumphant faith: "For the LORD God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." * Nay, when things had come to a crisis, and the nearest views of death, and of the eternal world, were presented to him, his faith was free from the least mixture of doubt; and we behold him triumphing in the full assurance of being eternally with the Father. Read his own words, "My flesh shall rest in hope: for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." †

It may then be enquired, how was our LORD affected at this time by the suspension of the smiles of his Father's face, or by the withdrawing the light of his Father's countenance? We humbly apprehend, for we ought to speak with great mo-

* Isa. l. 7. † Psal. xvi. 9, 10, 11. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," is, by the inspired Author of the Acts, interpreted, of not leaving his body in the grave, Acts ii. 29, 33.

deity on this subject, that the light of his Father's countenance was with-held from him, in as much as he, considered as *Man*, did not enjoy a *comfortable sense* of his relation to God. The human nature of our LORD being perfectly holy, did all along, under external sufferings, enjoy complete happiness in God. This circumstance was sufficient of itself to bear him up under all the scorn and contumelious usage which he met with from men and devils. But at this awful moment, a sense of this happiness is suspended. Though he could still say, that God was his God, yet he experienced this God deserting him. The desertion of friends was nothing when compared with the desertion of God, of his *own God*, in whom he had found inconceivable happiness. This was a circumstance which *now* deeply wounded the holy soul of the man CHRIST JESUS. How great is the sensibility of the saints, when they have just and lively views of God as hiding his face from them! * But suppose a holy Angel were, for a single moment, to suffer an eclipse of God's face, how would he cry out in unutterable anguish of soul! In such a situation he would feel more excruciating pain than the holiest saint upon earth. But the sensibility of the man CHRIST JESUS, when the light of God's countenance was withdrawn from him, must have been far superior to the sensibilities of all the holy Angels in Heaven, under similar circumstances. For the holy human nature of

* Psal. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9. Psal. lxxxviii. 7—17.

JESUS CHRIST, from the first moment of it's existence, subsisted in the second person of the adorable Trinity.

2dly, ANOTHER reason of that tremendous distress now endured by our LORD, arose from the *inconceivably painful and dreadful sensations of divine wrath*, which were impressed on his holy soul by the immediate hand of GOD. In the economy of our redemption, GOD the Father is to be considered as sustaining the character of the great Judge of all. Under this character he pronounceth the whole human race guilty; and, in consequence of guilt, dooms them to die. JESUS CHRIST, the Surety of elect sinners, is represented as appearing before the bar of his Father's justice, acknowledging the equity of the sentence passed upon guilty men; but, at the same time, declaring his infinite willingness to suffer the whole punishment incurred by all the millions whom he represented. The Father, in consequence of an eternal transaction with his own Son, accepts of the proffered payment of the elect's debt at his hands. Upon which a foundation is laid in law and justice, for transferring upon the Son of GOD, in our low nature, the whole punishment due to the sins of an elect world. Now, this *punishment* consisted chiefly in *sorrow*. For when GOD denounced punishment against transgression, he said to the woman, "I will greatly multiply thy *sorrow*; in *sorrow* thou shalt bring forth children. And to Adam he said, cursed is the ground for thy sake; in *sorrow* shalt thou

“eat of it all the days of thy life.” * From these passages, it plainly appears, that *sorrow* was the very *quintessence* of the curse. And as there is no sorrow like that which a sense of the divine wrath occasions, it is certain, our LORD was suffering that wrath, when he said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!” Indeed, without the admission of this idea, the words have no force nor meaning. Sorrow, arising from other causes, might doubtless make a deep impression upon his holy soul. But it ought to be considered, that every species and degree of sorrow necessarily supposed the curse originally denounced against transgression. Therefore, unless our LORD was bearing that curse, he could not have experienced sorrow of any kind. Upon this principle, all his preceding sorrows plainly indicated, that the great intention of his coming into the world, was, to bear the curse of the law. Add to this, that on the present occasion, the sorrow of his soul was of the most tremendous, of the most overwhelming nature; inasmuch, that it is said, in the words of the text, to have brought a temporary *death* upon his soul: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Now, wherein does the death of the soul consist? Not in the extinction of it’s principles, nor the annihilation of it’s powers: for in this case no sorrow could be felt by the soul. But our LORD says, “My soul is sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Things are commonly best illustrated by contrast.

* Gen. iii. 16. 17.

ing them with their opposites. The *life* of the soul, as we have already seen from the thirtieth Psalm, lies in the divine favour, and in the certain prospect of the enjoyment of that favour, even throughout eternity. On the other hand, the *death* of the soul necessarily supposes a sense of the divine favour withheld, together with a sense of the divine displeasure impressed in the deepest manner on the soul, by the immediate agency of God. This was the *death* of which our LORD speaks in the words of the text; and the *death*, which, at this time, he *actually* endured. The death of the cross, as it implies a bare separation between soul and body, was nothing at all when compared with this death of the *soul*.

THIS interpretation, and this alone, accounts for the other expressions used by our LORD on this occasion. In the thirty-seventh verse, as we have heard, he *began* to be sorrowful and very heavy. His life on earth was one continued, one uninterrupted scene of sorrow. Hence was he emphatically styled, *a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*. But the Evangelist says, that *now*, in the garden, he *began* to be sorrowful. He had formerly suffered from men, from the very men he came to redeem; but *now* he began to suffer from his heavenly Father. And though, very probably, the cup of wrath, which the Father, sustaining the character of the great judge of all, gave to his Son, as our illustrious Surety, to drink, was administered by itself; yet it is evident, from the words of our LORD, "Now is my *soul* troubled, and

“ what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour;
 “ but for this cause came I unto this hour,” * that
 our blessed Redeemer tasted of this inconceivably
 bitter cup, at least in the way of anticipation, pri-
 or to this time. But he must not only taste, but
 also drink deep of it; so deep, that the former
 taste is not reckoned upon by the Evangelist.
 And hence he says, “ Our LORD *now began* to be
 “ sorrowful.” In his continuing to drink of this
 bitter cup, he cries, “ Father, if it be possible,
 “ let this cup † pass from me!” † To reconcile this

* John xii. 27. † Matth. xxvi. 39.

† To overthrow the argument of our LORD’s bearing di-
 vine wrath in the garden, as arising from these and the pre-
 ceding words, it hath been said, that we are to compare what
 JESUS here says in the thirty ninth verse, in solemn prayer to
 his heavenly Father, with what he says to James and John, in
 Matth. xx. 23. But this displays deep ignorance of the Scrip-
 tures, and of the power of God. In the latter passage, the
 design of our LORD is evidently to convince the two Disciples,
 who were dreaming of a worldly kingdom, and desiring earnest-
 ly to be raised to the most distinguished stations in that king-
 dom, of the vanity of such hopes: nay, to inform them, that,
 as his kingdom was not of this world, instead of rising to sta-
 tions of high dignity, trust and profit upon earth, they must
 enter into the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation.
 Hence, he compares the various deep distresses which they
 should be called to endure, to a *cup*, in allusion to “ a custom
 “ which prevailed among the ancients, by which the father of a
 “ family, or master of a feast, was wont to send to his children or
 “ guests, a cup of such liquor as he intended for them: and by
 “ the kind and quantity of the liquor contained in it, the respect
 “ of the entertainer was expressed. Hence, *cup* came in general
 “ to signify a portion assigned whether of pleasure or sorrow. And

prayer with the truth of the fact, as known by JESUS CHRIST, some have supposed, that our LORD, as *man*, did not actually know whether he was to drink of this inconceivably bitter cup of the Father's wrath. But this cannot be admitted, for the following reasons.

“ many instances occur, in which it refers to the latter. Compare
 “ Psa. xi. 6. lxxiii. 10. Isa. li. 17. 22.” &c. Doddridge.

AND indeed the truth of our Lord's declaration was fully verified with regard to the two Disciples: for they were both exposed to extreme sufferings on account of their adherence to the gospel. Nay, it is certain, that James was the *first* of all the Apostles who suffered martyrdom for CHRIST, Acts xii. 2. and John, after enduring various extremities in the cause of CHRIST, was banished, by that cruel tyrant Domitian, into the isle of Patmos, where he tells us, that he was *a companion of Christ's tribulation*.

Now, the force of the Objector's argument is this; JESUS CHRIST hath represented his own sufferings, and the sufferings of the two Disciples, by the figurative expression of a *cup*; therefore, CHRIST and they must have endured precisely the *same kind* of sufferings. Is this a conclusive way of arguing? If the same cup may, at different times, contain very different kinds of liquor, why may not the figurative word *cup*, as applied to JESUS CHRIST and the redeemed, denote very *different kinds* of distress? And, is it not very evident, by attending to the circumstances of both passages of Scripture, that the sufferings of our LORD and of the two Disciples, though both expressed by a *cup*, were indeed of a very different kind?

IN the first place, let us consider that the sufferings of our LORD in the garden, when he cried to his Father, saying, “ Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me,” were *purely internal*. There was nothing of an external nature that could, at the period now referred to, give him the least uneasiness. On the other hand, when he represents the distresses which the

IN the first place, it appears as clear to me as any thing can be, from John xii. 27. already referred to, that our LORD, prior to the celebration of the last passover, actually predicted the sufferings of his soul; nay, experienced some impressions of divine wrath arising from the immediate hand of GOD.

two Disciples were to endure, he seems chiefly, if not solely, to have in his eye, those *external sufferings* to which they would be called to submit for the sake of the gospel.

IN the second place, it ought to be observed, that there is demonstration from Matth. xxvi. 38. that our LORD, in the garden, was actually drinking deep of the cup of the Father's wrath; but, to insinuate that our LORD predicted such kind of suffering to the Disciples, is not only *absurd* but *impious* to the last degree. The least drop of wrath would have sunk them to the lowest hell eternally.

IF it shall be said, that our LORD, in the intimation he gave to the two Disciples of their drinking of *his cup*, chiefly referred to their dying in a violent manner, as he was to suffer the death of the cross. This, however, is to give up the argument entirely with regard to the Disciples enduring the same kind of sufferings with those which were borne by JESUS CHRIST in the garden. And even *here* there is one circumstance arising from the general suffrage of antiquity, which entirely destroys the parallel between the *external sufferings* of our LORD on the cross, and those experienced by John, one of the Disciples he had addressed. It is this; John not only survived the rest of the Apostles, but also died a *natural death*. Whereas, every one knows, that our LORD's death was *violent*.

FROM all this it clearly appears, that by the Disciples drinking of *Christ's cup*, nothing more can be meant, than the general idea of their *conformity* to Christ in suffering in this world. Hence says Paul, "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

IN the next place, as a perfectly holy man, he must have had high ideas of the holy law, and of the infinite justice of God; and, consequently, must have thought more clearly concerning the nature of that penalty originally denounced against transgression, than to confine it to mere bodily sufferings. Saints here on earth, who are divinely illuminated, are fully convinced that the desert of every one of their sins is, the eternal wrath of God. How much more strongly must the man CHRIST JESUS, perfectly holy, have been convinced that the sins of all the millions of the redeemed, which were imputed to him, deserved to be punished with wrath, even infinite wrath?

BUT then it is demonstrably certain, that our LORD, as *man*, could not possibly know the *extent* of God's wrath: for that wrath was infinite; and surely no finite understanding could comprehend that which is infinite. Even upon this principle, the propriety of our LORD's praying to his Father for the removal of this cup, if it were possible, is perfectly evident. He might pray, if it were possible that he should be exempted from wading any longer in this boundless and bottomless sea of the Father's wrath, which threatened entirely to swallow up his human nature. But *as* the Son of God, he had perfect knowledge of the whole punishment due to the sins of an elect world; and therefore, he reconciled his holy human nature, which might well shrink and shudder at the idea of divine wrath, to the appointment of God in this great design.

WE are farther to consider, that the more holy any creature is, the more of real happiness he experienceth: and the more happy he is, the more averse he must be to the idea of being deprived of that happiness. Upon these principles, a faint, in this world, would tremble exceedingly at the very apprehension of enduring divine wrath but for a single moment. A perfectly holy angel would have a still more lively idea of the inconceivably dreadful distress that would arise from the momentary displeasure of God. What then must have been the ideas of the man CHRIST JESUS, who was not only perfectly holy, but in personal union with God the Son, when he was called to encounter divine wrath!

NEITHER was our LORD's bearing this wrath * injurious to the character of God, as a late

* WE mentioned before, the gross inconsistency between this Gentleman's sentiments, and those expressed in the Standards of our Church. Let us now point out the grounds upon which we rest this charge.

HE asserts, that our LORD's bearing divine wrath in the garden, is a sentiment that ought not to be admitted, because it is *injurious to the character of God*. In the Confession of Faith, chap. viii. 4. we are told, that the LORD JESUS *endured the most grievous torments immediately in his soul*. In the Larger Catechism to Question 49th, "How did CHRIST humble himself in his death?" we have this answer: "Christ humbled himself in his death, in that having been betrayed by Judas, forsaken by his Disciples, scorned and rejected by the world, condemned by Pilate, and tormented by his persecutors; having also conflicted with the terrors of death, and the powers of darkness, FELT and BORNE the WEIGHT of

Writer ignorantly supposeth. On the other hand, the character of GOD, as inflexibly just, unspottedly holy, and acting as the moral governor of the universe, did, upon the supposition of man's salvation, absolutely and indispensibly require, that JESUS CHRIST, the just, should suffer once this wrath for the unjust, that he might bring them to GOD. Very probably the words of our LORD upon the cross, "It is finished," relate to his completely drinking up the cup of divine wrath.

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"GOD'S WRATH, he laid down his life an offering for sin." In the Shorter Catechism to question 27th, "Wherein did CHRIST'S humiliation consist?" we have this answer. "CHRIST'S humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the WRATH of GOD, and the cursed death of the cross," &c. What a glaring inconsistency is here? The Church says, that the LORD JESUS actually underwent the *wrath of God*; but this Gentleman, who is a member of the Church, says, that a supposition of this kind is *injurious to the character of God*. I presume there is no person so weak as to insinuate a suspicion that the Larger and Shorter Catechisms have not the sanction of the highest Ecclesiastical authority. If there are any persons of this opinion, let me call their attention to the 12th Act of the General Assembly 1710, entitled, "Act for preserving the purity of doctrine. The General Assembly, considering that the purity of doctrine is a signal blessing to the church of God, and that it hath been the great happiness of this Church, ever since her reformation from Popery, to have enjoyed and maintained the same; and that avoiding all expressions in matters of faith, contrary to the form of sound words, tends not a little to preserve the said purity which is so desirable; and it being informed, that in some

3dly, ANOTHER highly probable reason for the present agony of our LORD, is, that Satan, with his infernal band, *now* assailed him in the most furious manner. Satan was the declared enemy of JESUS CHRIST, and of the cause in which our LORD was embarked; and therefore, we might-conclude on general principles, that he would lose no opportunity of heightening his distress; especially as Satan's invariable practice is, to add affliction to the afflicted. Never was the truth of this observation more fully verified than in his general conduct towards JESUS CHRIST, while he was upon earth. But the circumstance on which, in a peculiar manner, I found the high probability of the present attack, is, that important passage in our LORD's farewell Sermon, which deserves the deepest attention, "The Prince of this world *cometh*, and hath nothing in me." * Let us consider when these words were spoken. It is evident, that the whole of our LORD's farewell

" places, some expressions are used, and opinions, as to some
 " points of religion, vented, which are not agreeable to our
 " Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and the known Sentiments of the greatest lights, and most famous Gospel Ministers, wherewith this Church hath been blessed; Therefore,
 " the General Assembly does discharge all persons to vent any
 " opinions contrary to any Head or Article of the said Confession and Catechisms, or use *any expressions* in relation to
 " the Articles of Faith, not agreeable to the form of sound
 " words, expressed in the word of God, and the Confession of
 " Faith and Catechisms of this Church, which are most valuable pieces of her Reformation."

* John xiv. 30.

Sermon, comprehended in the 14, 15, and 16. chapters of John, was delivered immediately after the celebration of the first Supper, either in the guest-chamber, or else during the time of our LORD's walking with his Disciples from Jerusalem to the garden of Gethsemane. It does not make an hour of difference, which of these suppositions we adopt: for it was night when he eat the first Supper with his Disciples, and that very night he came to the garden of Gethsemane, and was betrayed by Judas. Now, observe what our LORD says just before going to the garden, "the Prince of this world *cometh*;" he does not say, "he shall come," but "he *cometh*;" he is *now* on his way, and a bloody attack will quickly be made by him, armed with all his artillery, on me. But however sharp the conflict may be, the issue will be glorious. I am fully assured of complete victory over him. This assurance I rest on many stable grounds; particularly, I declare at this time, that "he hath nothing in me;" no party in me to co-operate with him in the prosecution of his diabolical designs.

THIS sentiment seems to receive some confirmation from the words of JESUS CHRIST, recorded by the Evangelist Luke, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness."* These words were spoken by our LORD, when he was *actually* in the garden, immediately after Judas, at the head of a ruffian band, had given the signal to apprehend

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* Luke xxii. 53.

him. Then we are sure he was engaged with the powers of darkness; but very probably, his conflict with them began with his agony.

THESE then appear to us to be the *true reasons* of our LORD's agony in the garden, in opposition to the false or frivolous ones urged by men whose minds have never been thoroughly reconciled to the way of saving sinners, by the substitution and sacrifice of the Son of GOD. The first two we may look upon as demonstrably certain from the very words of our text; the last carries with it a very high degree of probability.

As I consider this subject to be of infinite importance in the Christian system, and as the knowledge of it is connected with true comfort and holiness, permit me, very briefly, to lay before you, who are the saints of GOD, for the establishment of your faith, and the increase of your spiritual joy, the principles whereupon the whole of the reasoning on this point is entirely built.

IN the first place, when man violated the holy law, he was considered as guilty of criminal rebellion against the righteous government of GOD, in his whole person, consisting of soul and body. Both these constituent parts of the man participated in the guilt; and therefore, both, in justice, ought to share in the punishment. Indeed, if we speak with precision, the soul was the intelligent, thinking principle, which alone was capable of understanding the will of GOD; and, consequently, of obeying or disobeying that will. If man had persevered in a state of obedience, his soul

was chiefly to be considered in recommending and enforcing that obedience; and representing at once, how honourable and advantageous it was for the creature to live in constant and uninterrupted dependance upon the Creator. The body therefore, in this view, could have only been the instrument of the soul, for carrying into execution what the soul projected and highly approved of, as becoming the station assigned a rational creature upon earth. On the other hand, when man sinned, his soul must be considered as principally concerned in guilt. It was with his soul that he listened to the artful insinuations of Satan, in opposition to the plain declarations of the ever living and true God. His body was only the instrument for executing what was already determined and resolved upon in his soul. And therefore, nothing was more reasonable than this; if the man was to suffer for his transgression, his soul, which was principally concerned in sin, should be the principal sufferer. But if the body be considered as an accessory to the soul in sin, the body deserved, on that account, to share with the soul in suffering.

2dly, THE just desert of sin was the infinite wrath of God. He, who was offended, was supremely glorious and excellent, a person of infinite dignity and beauty. Man being a creature possessed of rational powers, was under an infinite obligation to love that God, who had, from all eternity, remained in the undisturbed possession of all the excellences peculiar to Deity. Of conse-

quence, if man was infinitely bound to love God, it became infinitely culpable in him to withdraw that love from God for a single moment, and to transfer it to any other object. And where there is a crime of infinite evil, surely that crime deserves infinite punishment. But as nothing can be more irrational, than to suppose that a finite creature is capable of bearing infinite punishment, we are hence led to see the true foundation of the eternity of hell torments. Because punishment due to transgression cannot be exhausted by a finite creature in a certain limited time, it must be extended to all eternity. And this is the very punishment threatened in the law of God against transgression. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" thy body shall not only be liable to death, but thy whole person, consisting of soul and body, shall be exposed to everlasting destruction from the presence of the LORD, and the glory of his power. And hence Paul, under the immediate influence of the Spirit of Inspiration, assures us "the wages of sin is death," * *eternal death*; because it is contrasted with *eternal life* in the following clause of the verse. This *eternal death* chiefly denotes those strong impressions of divine wrath, which are made on the soul by the immediate agency of God. Hence, the call directed to sinners, under the dispensation of the Gospel, to fly from the *wrath to come*, by taking sanctuary in the blood of the Son of God.

3dly, JESUS CHRIST, the ever-blessed and eternal

* Rom. vi. 23.

Son of God, constrained by motives of sovereign and self-moving love, substitutes himself in the room of sinners. And having, in the fulness of time, assumed their inferior nature, he generously consents to suffer, in *soul* and *body*, the whole punishment * due to the sins of an elect world; and

* WHAT we have here hinted, concerning the fulness of the atonement made by JESUS CHRIST, cannot be invalidated, in the smallest degree, by the account we have of an angel from heaven being dispatched to strengthen him during his agony in the garden.

It is absurd to suppose, that the angel, who was one of the creatures of his power, could strengthen him by imparting any *physical influence* to him; or, which is the same thing in other words, by any actual communication of *natural vigour* to his body and mind. This exceeded the limits of the power of all the holy-angels in heaven. It is God the Creator alone, who at first gives to the creature what degree of *natural strength* he pleaseth; it is he alone who maintains or renews that strength.

It follows therefore, that this celestial courtier, now dispatched from the heavenly world, could only strengthen our LORD *morally*; that is, by setting before the mind of the man CHRIST JESUS such striking motives as were suited, by the divine blessing, to introduce some degree of comfort into his human soul, now distressed beyond all conception, and urging these motives in the strongest manner. For it is by no means inconsistent with our LORD's completely drinking the cup of the Father's wrath, to say, that, at certain intervals, there were temporary gleams of comfort which broke in upon his soul.

If any one shall ask, what were the motives which were propounded by the angel to the man CHRIST JESUS, the operation of which, by the divine blessing, gave him some degree of comfort; and consequently, some degree of spiritual strength? We reply, as Scripture is silent, it would be going beyond our depth to pretend to ascertain them. We only say, that what appears most *probable* to us, is, that the angel, on this occasion,

thereby to lay the deepest foundation, in the very justice of God, for their deliverance from suffering in *soul* and *body*. And as they deserved to suffer chiefly in their souls, it evidently follows, that the principal sufferings endured by the Surety, must be in his soul. And when can he be supposed to suffer in his soul, if not in the garden of Gethsemane, when he himself said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?" Did the people he represented deserve wrath; and shall wrath come, even to the very uttermost, upon all who are not finally found interested in the glorious Surety? It follows, as an unavoidable consequence, that JESUS, our adorable Redeemer, suffered all that wrath which was the desert of all the sins of the countless myriads of the elect. But a

urged to the man CHRIST JESUS, that his present sufferings, however awful and tremendous, would quickly have an end; that, during the short time of their continuance, his faith, founded on the promise of an unchangeable God to strengthen and uphold him, should remain firm as a rock; and particularly, that he, in his Mediatorial character, was *just now* the object of the Father's infinite complacency and delight. Add to these considerations, that the angel might now exhibit to the mind of the man CHRIST JESUS such a striking representation of the glory that would eternally redound unto God, and to himself as Mediator; and of the happiness which would arise to countless myriads of the redeemed from his present sufferings; as might, through the divine blessing, introduce some degree of comfort into the human soul of JESUS CHRIST; and consequently, give him some degree of spiritual strength: for the joy of the Lord is strength to the upright. As these seem to me to be highly probable, the adoption of them tends, in some measure, to illustrate this important passage of holy writ.

sense of wrath, as we have already seen, is the very quintessence of the curse; and gives us a true and an affecting idea of that *death* which was now brought upon the soul of the Son of God. This is plain scriptural reasoning; and we hope, in a peculiar manner, calculated to illustrate and confirm the truth of that beautiful expression, upon which I desire, through grace, to rest my everlasting hopes: "JESUS, who delivered us from the "wrath to come." * He could not, with reverence be it spoken, deliver his people from wrath in any other way, than by bearing that wrath in his own soul: for the tenor of the sentence passed by the eternal and unchangeable law of God was, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely "die;" † thou, or a Surety in thy stead. The law did not, and could not, admit of any other alternative. To say, as some do, that JESUS delivereth us from the wrath to come, by affording us the means and motives of repentance, is, to trifle with the holiness, the justice, and the faithfulness of God; and to show no regard at all to the character of God, as the moral governor of the world.

4thly, We observe, that however cruel and unjust the treatment was which our LORD met with from men, both before and after his agony in the garden, yet we are to consider him, at this time, as suffering *justly* from the hands of God. "Shall "not the judge of all the earth do right?" was a

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* 1 Thes. i. 10. † Gen. ii. 17.

sentiment founded in the eternal justice and holiness of God. In the economy of our redemption, the Father, as we have formerly remarked, is considered as sustaining the character of the great Judge of all. Under this character, he was obliged to inflict punishment either on the sinner himself, or else on his Surety. To have inflicted punishment neither on the one nor on the other, would have been openly denying his justice, his holiness, and his faithfulness; or, which is the same thing in other words, telling all worlds, that he was no longer the just, the holy, or the faithful God. Now, as he had agreed, in the eternal covenant-transaction with his own Son, to accept of him as the Surety of elect sinners, his justice *must* transfer on him the whole punishment which their sins deserved. And therefore, the Father, in pouring into the holy soul of JESUS CHRIST all that wrath which was the desert of his people's sins, acted in a manner becoming the majesty, the holiness, the justice, and the rectoral authority of the God-head.

BUT here a difficulty occurs, which hath been considered as insuperable by the enemies of the doctrine of atonement. They have said plainly, if it be certain that JESUS CHRIST bore the wrath of God under the character of the Surety of sinners, then it seems evidently to follow, that JESUS CHRIST was, at that time, the object of his Father's displeasure. But, say they, nothing is more evident than that he was the object of the Father's highest love and complacency, under his

most overwhelming sufferings. This difficulty, which is only apparent, if we view the words of inspiration, seems to have acquired all the force of a *real one*, by the unhappy distinction to which some of the friends of the doctrine of atonement have had recourse. They have ventured to insinuate, that GOD the Father was infinitely well pleased with JESUS CHRIST *as his own Son*; but that he was displeased with him *as Mediator*. Now, I call this an unhappy distinction; because it is so far from being supported by any solid Scripture argument, that it is as evidently contrary to Scripture as any thing can be. JESUS CHRIST, as Mediator, was the object of the Father's highest love and complacency even from eternity. Was it not the Father who set him up as the head of a redeemed world, in the divine counsels, from everlasting ages? And would God, infinitely wise, do a thing with which he was displeased? It is impious to the last degree to suppose it. Again, was it not GOD the Father, who set him forth in the fulness of time to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood? Here also one might ask, did the Father do a thing with which he had reason to be displeased? But instead of arguing in this way, though to us perfectly convincing and conclusive, let us appeal to the words of JESUS CHRIST; "Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep." * Here our LORD evidently speaks of himself under his medi-

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* John x. 17.

atorial character; and assures us, that the Father loveth him, *because he was to lay down his life a ransom for the sheep*. Of consequence, JESUS CHRIST could not be the object of his Father's wrath or displeasure on that account.

How then, may it be said, is CHRIST's bearing the wrath of God consistent with his being the object of the Father's love, even in his mediatorial character? It might be sufficient to say, in the way of reply, that if both these appear evidently to be facts stated in the word of God, we are to give full credit to them, though we should be unable to reconcile the one with the other. There are many things which form an important part of divine revelation, of which we can have no adequate conception: but surely it would be very absurd, on this account, to reject them. In the present case, the difficulty will, in a great measure, vanish, if we attend to the following considerations.

In the first place, what deserves the deepest attention is, that the very reason assigned by our LORD himself, in the passage just now referred to, why the Father loves him *as Mediator*, is, *because he was to lay down his life for the sheep*; that is to say, because he was to bear the wrath of God in the room of the redeemed. Now, if this was the very *reason* of the Father's love to him in his mediatorial character, the difficulty seems wholly to disappear. We confess, no instance completely parallel can be found among men. All the ways of God are unsearchable; and particularly, this way of his laying the punish-

ment of our iniquities upon his own Son, who had generously undertaken our cause. But we are obliged to assert, that love to him, as Mediator, is consistent with the infliction of that punishment upon him. To help our conceptions in this matter, we may think of a great king sending his son into the distant parts of his dominions, to quell a rebellion that threatened the entire dissolution of his government. Would not this king love his son in his *military character*, because he had fought and bled in support of his government; and had been successful in subduing the rebels, and restoring the blessings of peace among his father's subjects? The parallel is not, and cannot be complete; the simile is only introduced to assist us in conceiving of this mysterious affair. Sacred writ represents the Father of mercies, as *taking pleasure to bruise his own Son*. * Not that he had pleasure in the act of bruising. To suppose this, would be impious to the last degree. He hath no intrinsic pleasure in punishing devils and damned spirits in hell throughout eternity. It is the glory of his justice, and the honour of his moral government, which require the infliction of punishment upon them without interruption and without end. Much less could he have pleasure in the *act* of bruising his own Son. But when JEHOVAH the Father saw the glorious consequences which would arise from this conduct of his towards his own Son; when he saw that hereby occasion would be given to the highest possible manifestation of

* Isa. liii. 10.

the divine perfections, and to the redemption of countless millions of lost men, it *pleased* JEHOVAH the Father, in this view, to *bruise his own Son*. This farther demonstrates, that our LORD, at this time, was not the object of his Father's displeasure.

2dly, WE may, and we ought to distinguish between sin itself, and the person on whom it's punishment is transferred by a divine constitution. With regard to sin itself, it always was, and throughout eternity must remain, the object of God's highest displeasure. But it by no means follows, that he who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and who was chosen by God for the very purpose of glorifying all the divine perfections by the expiation of the guilt of elect sinners, should be the object of his wrath. Indeed, sin imputed to CHRIST was the object of the divine indignation and wrath; therefore, God punished it even in the person of his own Son, in the most awful and exemplary manner. But still, in the apprehension of God, there was a distinction now made between the punishment of sin actually inflicted, and the person chosen by God to suffer that punishment for the vindication of the authority and government of God in the remission of sin.

EVEN with regard to the redeemed in this world, it is demonstrably certain, that their persons are accepted in CHRIST JESUS, the blessed Beloved; that is, God is well pleased with them in CHRIST JESUS. But who would be so absurd as to say,

that God is well pleased with sin in them? On the other hand, God hates sin in the souls of his people, as much as he doth in devils and damned spirits.

IN like manner, may we not conceive how God the Father might love his Son, as Mediator, in the tenderest manner, and yet hate sin imputed to him, and punish that sin suitably to its infinite demerit. A father may love a son tenderly even when he chastises him for his faults. Much more might God the Father love his Son, as Mediator, even when he was punishing in his person that which was no fault of his, but the fault of the men he came to redeem.

3dly, WE see plainly, in the case of Job's friends, how love to their persons is consistent with a strong expression of indignation at their sins. We suppose there are none who will doubt that Job's three friends were indeed the friends of God; and yet, hear the LORD's address to Eliphaz, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends." Why? "For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as hath my servant Job. Wherefore, take unto yourselves seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering, and he shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly." * Here it is evident, when God says, "My wrath is kindled against you," the meaning is, my wrath is kindled against sin in you, and committ-

* Job xlii. 7, 8.

ed by you; for their persons were still accepted through the great Mediator. In like manner, might not love to CHRIST, as Mediator, be perfectly consistent with the divine indignation expressed at sin imputed to him?

WE now proceed, in the third place, as was proposed, to point out the influence of this important doctrine upon universal holiness. This part of the subject would appear *deeply interesting* to real Christians at all times, as it is their high ambition to express the influence of their religious principles in the general course of their conduct. But there are times, when the thorough discussion of any particular point appears much more necessary than at others. And surely, if ever there was a time when men, well affected to the interests of real Christianity, were called upon to demonstrate the influence of their principles upon universal holiness, it is the present time. For *now* we see men boldly avowing their disbelief of the *distinguishing doctrines* of Christianity; and at the same time affecting, with an air of plausibility, to represent the fallacious system of principles they have adopted as equally subserving the general interests of virtue. For this reason, I hope to meet with the approbation of the candid Reader, while I attempt to represent what is the influence of a true belief of this doctrine, that the Son of God, as our Surety, suffered divine wrath; and how that influence is impaired or destroyed, by those who would account for our LORD's sufferings, with-

out acknowledging that doctrine. With this view, I shall argue from principles, which every one, who considers the springs of action in the human heart, must admit.

IN the first place, that doctrine is *most* calculated to promote holiness, which gives the *highest and most illustrious display* of the justice and holiness of God. This is evident at first view; because the intention of God, in all his works, is, to display his glory, and to make his holiness apparent before the eyes of intelligent creatures. And the higher display he gives of his glory, the more striking representation of his holiness is exhibited. Now, where can we have such a high view of the justice and holiness of God, as in the contemplation of his Son enduring divine wrath? Justice will appear awful in punishing devils and damned spirits in hell throughout eternity. But justice appears *more awful, and more tremendous*, in inflicting the punishment of our sins, nay, the whole punishment we deserved, upon the incarnate Son of God, when representing an elect world. The inflexible nature of divine justice never did, never can appear so strongly, as in the exacting from the hands of *God's own, God's infinitely well beloved Son*, the utmost farthing of that debt which we had incurred. If ever any part of it could have been remitted, surely it was when the Son of the Father's love undertook to pay it. But the *not sparing him, the not giving him any favour or indulgence* in this respect, demonstrated to all intelligent worlds, that divine justice was an essential

perfection of the God-head; and that it could no more be dispensed with, than GOD could deny himself.

AGAIN, in the contemplation of the Son of GOD bearing divine wrath, as the just desert of our sins, we have the *highest possible display* of the infinite holiness of GOD. Had any sacrifice, inferior to that of JESUS CHRIST, been sufficient for appeasing the offended majesty of heaven, and turning away his wrath from transgressors, it is certain that we never could have seen the glory of divine holiness shining forth with *meridian splendour*. Upon that principle, sinners might have supposed, that, guilty and condemned as they were, access to GOD might easily be procured for them. But when no less a sacrifice than that of GOD's own Son was available to the purpose of expiating our guilt, the sinner's access to GOD seemed to be a matter attended with *infinite difficulty*. For now it *appeared* to all intelligent worlds, that GOD must eternally remain at an unapproachable distance from sinners, did not his Son, who was his *fellow and equal*, give himself, in human nature, to be the ransom for their souls; and thereby preserve unsullied the glory of divine holiness, in the redemption of lost men. And therefore, with reverence be it spoken, it was impossible for GOD himself to give a higher manifestation of the glory of his infinite justice and holiness, than that which he exhibited to all intelligent worlds in his own Son, while suffering divine wrath. Of consequence, in the vicarious

sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, we have views of the justice and holiness of GOD, which are as much calculated for promoting holiness as the infinite wisdom of GOD could contrive.

ON the other hand, the Socinian doctrine, which represents JESUS CHRIST as a mere man, and subject only to external sufferings for the good of men, cannot, in it's own nature, be calculated to promote holiness. For instead of giving men just and affecting ideas of the *justice* and *holiness* of GOD, it is really suited to *mislead* them. For the Socinians deny at least the exercise of punitive * justice in GOD. Hence they say, it was not necessary to inflict the punishment of our sins either on us, or on CHRIST JESUS. And as justice ariseth from wisdom and goodness, they, of consequence, deny that GOD is either wise or good. Again, the holiness of GOD, which spreads a lustre over all the perfections peculiar to Deity, is not and cannot be beheld in it's proper light by those who sit down on pure Socinian principles. His infinite love to holiness can never appear in delivering up a mere man to suffering, when, according to the Socinian scheme, it was very easy for him to pardon the sinner, and receive him into favour, without any satisfaction for his offence. In the sufferings of CHRIST, according to that scheme, you see only the holiness of a *mere man*;

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* By punitive justice, we understand that perfection of the divine nature, which is employed in awarding or inflicting that punishment which is connected with the violation of the law.

but in his vicarious sufferings, the real Christian sees the holiness of God. Hence the glory of God's holiness is entirely eclipsed by the Socinians.

ARE these the views of the justice and holiness of God, which are calculated to make men Christians? If suitable views of the divine perfections lay a deep foundation for genuine Christianity in the soul, partial and erroneous views of them must be favourable to false religion. Now, the God whom the Socinians adore, is not the God revealed in the Scriptures: for the God revealed in the Scriptures subsists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But the God of Socinians is one person. The Saviour of real Christians is the Son of God, in human nature, suffering the punishment due to their offences; but the Saviour of Socinians is a mere man, who only endured external sufferings. The sanctifier of real Christians is the Holy Ghost, who is possessed of the same divine nature and perfections with the Father; but this Holy Spirit, according to Socinians, either has no personal existence at all, or else is a mere creature.

How then can the religion of Socinians be the same with that of real Christians? Indeed, the one is as opposite to the other as darkness is to light. Does the contemplation of the soul sufferings of JESUS CHRIST inspire the believing sinner with just views of God, and thereby lead to universal holiness; the tendency of this part of the Socinian scheme is, to lead men to erect an idol or

fictional deity in their own minds, and then fall down and worship that imaginary being. Let no person say, that this is a digression from the argument. I am just now representing the false views of God, which the Socinian doctrine, with regard to CHRIST's sufferings, gives. And therefore, it clearly follows, that the tendency of Socinianism is either to idolatry, gross idolatry, on the one hand, or to Atheism on the other. I pretend not to say that Socinians see the consequences of their own principles; but it is surely my business to urge them.

2dly, THAT doctrine which gives the most lively and affecting representation of the *infinite evil* of sin, is, without all doubt, most eminently calculated to promote the interests of holiness. Now, where can we have such striking views of the infinite abhorrence which God expresses at all sin, as in the sufferings of his own Son? Had it been consistent with the perfections peculiar to Deity, to forgive sin without a sacrifice of infinite value, who can think that God, whose perfect wisdom leads him to do nothing in vain, would have set forth his own Son to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood? But in this mysterious dispensation, we behold indeed an infinite evil in transgression. For God, in the tremendous sufferings of his Son, gave a public notification to all intelligent worlds, that the least sin that ever was committed, could not be pardoned without the shedding of blood of infinite value. The inconceivable malignity which

is in sin can never be completely seen in it's effects, while these effects appear only in finite creatures. And hence, the destruction of the anti-deluvian world, or the pouring forth torrents of liquid fire upon the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, or even punishing the wicked eternally in hell, are not suited to give a *complete* view of the evil of transgression. In all these instances, we only behold *creatures* suffering for their criminal rebellion in rising up against the righteous government of God; but, in the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST our redeeming LORD, we see the *Creator* himself suffering in the inferior nature of his own creature. And therefore, this was the most astonishing spectacle that ever was presented to the eyes of intelligent creatures since the commencement of time; and probably there will be nothing in the annals of eternity that can once be compared to it. The view therefore of our LORD's sufferings, especially in his soul, is as much suited to create the utmost abhorrence of all manner of iniquity in believing men, as the infinite wisdom of God could contrive. Here the Son of the Father's love, and second person of the adorable Trinity, is beheld, in consequence of his own voluntary undertaking, as drinking of the cup of the Father's wrath. Neither is it a few drops of that wrath which can satisfy divine justice for the sins of men; the whole of what was due to elect sinners must be drunk up, nay, the very dregs of this cup of trembling completely exhausted. Therefore, if sin does not appear

in the sufferings of the Son of God an infinite evil, which every rational creature ought to avoid with the utmost care, we may say with reverence, that it is impossible for God himself to give a clearer and more affecting representation of it.

ON the other hand, upon the Socinian principles, the *intrinsic evil* of sin cannot be suitably discerned. A vail is drawn over it's malignity; and assuming a false appearance, it solicits with success the affections of it's deluded votaries. For by their scheme, the wrath of God was no part of the just desert or demerit of sin. If sin deserved to be punished in that way, undoubtedly that punishment must be inflicted either on the sinner himself, or else on the Surety. But if sin deserved no such punishment as the bearing of divine wrath implies, and if no sacrifice of infinite value were necessary to expiate it's guilt, then there was no infinite evil in sin, God was not infinitely displeased at it; and therefore, could not act as if he were so, by inflicting on sinners eternal punishment.

SUCH is the tendency of the Socinian scheme; a scheme, which, by slight and partial views of sin, extenuates it's guilt, which imagines it treated with indulgence under the government of God, and divests the Deity of his character as infinitely righteous and holy. Such a scheme, I say, instead of advancing, or even supporting the true interests of holiness and virtue, overthrows their very foundations, disarms threatened punishment of it's terror, lulls the offender fast a-

sleep in sin, veils from his sight the necessity of a Saviour, and encourages him to go on in impenitence and unbelief, till he land in the regions of horror and despair. The pernicious tendency of these errors remains, though men who teach them may be blind to it, nay, think they are contending for important truths; and hence, with the rash and furious zeal of a persecuting Saul, and of the ancient Pharisees, may compass sea and land to make one proselyte.

3dly, THAT doctrine which lays a deep and solid foundation for spiritual joy must be eminently subservient to the interests of holiness. For holiness and spiritual joy have a reciprocal influence upon one another. The more any one is distinguished for purity of character, the higher will his transports of spiritual joy rise; and, on the other hand, the greater his joy in God, the more striking resemblance will he bear to the Deity in true holiness. This will not be controverted by any man of reflection. And indeed, it were easy to show that both parts of the proposition have a deep foundation in the word of God. Are we not expressly told, that they who walked in the fear of the LORD, *walked* also in the comfort of the Holy Ghost? * On the other hand, what is the meaning of the godly man being so frequently introduced as delighting in the law of the LORD; † as making the statutes of the most high God his song in the house of his pilgrimage? ‡ Is it not evidently this, that the higher transports of

* Acts ix. 31. † Psal. i. 2. ‡ Psal. cxix. 54.

spiritual joy he riseth to the possession of through the influence of sovereign grace, the brighter traces of the divine image are left upon his soul? For the very nature and tendency of spiritual joy is, to elevate and ennoble the soul, by restoring it to it's true dignity, and giving a happy direction to all it's powers.

Now, that the doctrine of CHRIST's bearing the wrath of God, which we are considering, lays the deepest foundation for the believing sinner's participation of spiritual joy, is evident to any person who credits the truth of divine revelation. Are we not told, that our LORD "was wounded for our transgressions; and that by his stripes we are healed?" * Or, to divest the expression of the metaphor, that the sufferings of our LORD procured for us all spiritual and heavenly blessings. And is not every one of these a copious source of joy? The inspired apostle likewise informs us, "That God set forth his own Son to be a propitiation for sin through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness in the remission of sins." † Is there no joy arising from the forgiveness of sin? Surely, if we believe our LORD, this is to be considered as the primary or radical source of a sinner's joy; "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." ‡ And to mention only one passage more, "JESUS CHRIST," we are told, "was made sin, a sin-offering for us." For what end? "That we might be made the righ-

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* Isa. liii. 5. † Rom. iii. 25. 26. ‡ Matth. ix. 2.

“teousness of God in him.” * And is there no joy in a sinner’s standing accepted eternally before God infinitely holy, through faith in the imputed righteousness of JESUS CHRIST?

BUT it is unnecessary to proceed any farther in referring to particular passages. This glorious doctrine pervades the whole of revelation; and if it were exploded, revelation itself would be of little or no consequence to us. And indeed, the thing is self evident. For if, as hath been already proved, we deserved eternal wrath, must it not create ineffable joy in the soul to be delivered from that wrath? Would the man who had endured the most agonizing pain arising from a violent fit of the gout or gravel, for the space of twenty-four hours, think himself deeply indebted to a physician who was happily instrumental in delivering him? And would his joy on obtaining the deliverance rise in proportion to his former sorrow? Then say, if imagination itself can figure, what must be the joy of the believing sinner, when he hears that his deliverance from an eternity of wrath was purchased for him with the price of the blood of GOD’S own Son. For one single drop of divine wrath is infinitely more tormenting to the soul, than the accumulation of all the external distresses ever known since the foundation of the world can be to the body. And must it not be a great accession to his joy, to be ascertained, on the authority of the faithful God, of a title to eternal life, through the vicarious

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

sufferings of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? Nay, the moment he is justified, he receives the spirit of sanctification through faith in the righteousness of GOD. There is now a spring of joy opened in his soul which will never run dry. And in proportion as that joy is increased through the renewed supplies of the Spirit of CHRIST, such will be the progress the saint makes in universal holiness. For the joy which comes from GOD always leads to GOD; and consequently, promotes growing conformity to his holy image.

LET us now view the argument on the other side of the question; and it is evident that the Socinian doctrine, which divests our LORD of the glory of being a *complete Surety*, at the same time excludes from the rest into which they who believe do enter, by viewing a finished redemption; and from the joy unspeakable and full of glory often felt from a sense of interest in the blood and merits of the SAVIOUR. But something more dreadful must be added. That scheme, while it cherishes in it's blind deluded votaries the joys of presumption and self-deceit, conducts them, after these dreams of bliss are over, to the regions of horror, darkness and despair.

4thly, THAT doctrine which is most calculated to promote deep humility, evidently tends most effectually to strengthen the obligations to holiness. The truth of this principle cannot be called in question by any but by the sceptic, or profane scoffer, with neither of whom we wish, just

now, to reason. Humility is the very ornament of the Christian; and it prevails in the soul, in an exact proportion to the degree of holiness which is attained through the influence of sovereign and almighty grace. Hence, the most holy saint on earth is the most humble; and hence also, the glorified saint within the veil, has attained to a degree of humility, unknown and unexperienced by the wisest and best of the children of God connected with this present state. A man may be possessed of very bright and distinguished talents; but if he be under the governing influence of pride, it is impossible that these talents can be properly applied. Pride sullies all their lustre; and renders those very gifts which might be eminently and extensively useful to men, the very means of doing them the greatest mischief. On the other hand, humility adorns the most shining abilities which any man can possess.

Now, it will be easy to show, that the doctrine of the Son of God's enduring divine wrath is eminently calculated to lay prostrate every idea of pride and self importance in the human soul. With this view, we are to consider,

In the first place, that the *deepest sense* of the *sinner's dependance upon God* for deliverance from eternal wrath, and for his title to eternal happiness, is *thereby* preserved on his mind. It was the glory of man's primeval state, that he acknowledged his dependance upon the great Creator for all he had, and for all he hoped to enjoy,

and felt proportionable happiness arising from that acknowledgement. And the very quintessence of the first sin appeared in man's affecting a state of independance upon God. Therefore, to recover man from the guilt and bondage of iniquity, is, to bring him back to a *sense* of his necessary and uninterrupted dependance upon him who is the God of glory. Now, had we been indebted to the LORD JESUS CHRIST only for a small deliverance, we would doubtless have been called to show our humility in the acceptance of that deliverance. Does it not become a poor man, who owes the preservation of his life to a generous friend, to behave with every mark of humility towards that friend? But the Christian is indebted to the LORD CHRIST for the greatest of all deliverances, I mean a deliverance from guilt, and consequently from eternal misery. And this lays the deepest and most solid foundation for real humility. For he now sees, that it was not by his own prayers, or tears, or religious attainments, that he could obtain deliverance from the pit of eternal perdition. Had not the Son of God generously interposed in his behalf by the substitution and sacrifice of himself, he must have lamented a lost God, and a lost soul through all eternity. And therefore, he desires to walk humbly, as one so deeply indebted to the ever-glorious Redeemer.

AGAIN, think of the Christian as obtaining a title to eternal life, only on account of the Son of God bearing divine wrath in human nature;

what a new, what a strong incitement hath he to the profoundest humility! Doth it become a poor man, who hath all his dependance for food and raiment upon a generous friend, to behave haughtily towards that friend? Would not a conduct of this kind shock every man whose sensibilities were not utterly lost in riot and dissipation? And shall the Christian be proud, who depends on the Son of God for giving him a sure and indisputable title to eternal life in the heavenly world, and laying the foundation of that title in his own bearing divine wrath! Men may talk of humility as they please; but there can be no genuine humility, such as God approves, till the sinner be brought, under the influence of sovereign and almighty grace, to rest upon the perfect righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, as the sole foundation of his everlasting hopes. Hence, the Apostle observes, that the pride of the ancient Jews *chiefly* appeared in the keen opposition they gave to the method of a sinner's acceptance with God, on account of the finished work of JESUS CHRIST. The passage is extremely remarkable; "For they, " being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, " have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." * And as far as we know, neither the annals of time, nor of eternity, will ever be able to furnish out a single instance of a creature who depends upon God for deliverance from everlasting misery, and a title to everlasting

* Rom. i. 3.

glory, but man: and both these purchased and infallibly secured for him, in a manner that will astonish all heaven throughout the revolutions of eternity.

BUT, to illustrate this particular still farther, let us, in the next place, think of the redemption of lost men unto God, by his own Son enduring divine wrath, as the highest and most illustrious manifestation of the *wisdom* of God; and here also we shall see how humbly the sinner ought to lie before the LORD! Had it been consistent with the divine perfections to save men in any other way, they would have had little cause to boast, seeing they deserved eternally to share in the effects of their ungrateful apostasy. But it would seem, no other way of salvation was possible. And now, behold the unsearchable wisdom of God, from all eternity, planning out this wise and wonderful scheme of saving the chief of sinners, through the death of his own Son! Humility, properly speaking, implies a *sense* of the distance between the creature and the Creator. Should not then God's deigning to hold any correspondence or intercourse with man, in his best estate, have tended to inspire him with humility? Shall the infinitely great and glorious God come near to a man who is only dust and ashes! Shall this God admit such a creature to holy fellowship with him, how humble ought that creature to be! His very elevation to this high privilege served to promote his humility. But if we consider man as a guilty condemned criminal, we

may be still more deeply astonished at the idea of the infinitely holy God holding friendly intercourse with him! And to lay the foundation for that intercourse, the very *glory* of an infinite understanding is, from everlasting ages, exerted in contriving the method of our recovery by the substitution and sacrifice of the Son of God. Surely the sinner must be disposed to lie prostrate, all in tears, before the LORD, when he thinks of infinite wisdom combining with infinite love to lay the plan of his salvation broad and deep, when no application could be made in his behalf by any creature; and consequently, without divine interposition, he must have experienced the effects of his ungrateful apostasy to all eternity. Such a sinner, deeply penetrated with a sense of his own guilt, and of the condescending grace of God, will be ready to exclaim; "Who am I, O LORD GOD; or what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And is this the manner of man, O LORD GOD?" *

ON the other hand, the Socinian doctrine, upon this point, evidently serves to cherish the detestable principle of pride in the heart of the sinner; and thereby, instead of conforming him to the image of God, to conform him to the very image of the devil. This appears evident from the following considerations.

THE Socinians warmly contend, that the sacrifice of the Son of God doth not constitute the sole foundation of a sinner's justification in the

divine presence. No! The pardon of sin, and acceptance with God, according to their scheme, is, in part, owing to our repentance, sincere obedience, and good works. Now, it is perfectly clear, that as far as we contribute towards our own justification, there is a proportionable foundation laid for boasting. For the more we see of the merit of our own good works, the less we see of the kindness of the Son of God in generously interposing in our behalf; and consequently, the more we admire and praise ourselves, as having wrought out our own deliverance. Hence, according to this plan, a foundation is laid for glorying in the divine presence. Even the guilty polluted sinner may boast that he is able to contribute, in some degree, towards his own salvation, and that before the independent and holy God. But if Socinians will believe the Scriptures, we are "saved solely by grace, not of works, lest any man should boast." * Again, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." † Now, observe the end of God in all this, "That no flesh should glory in his presence." And indeed, if we are saved by works, we are not saved by

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* Eph. ii. 8, 9. † 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, 29.

grace at all; otherwise, the reasoning of the inspired Apostle cannot possibly be deemed conclusive. For thus he argues, "Even so at this present time, " there is a remnant according to the election of " grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of " works; otherwise grace is no more grace: " but if it be of works, then it is no more of " grace; otherwise work is no more work." * So that, here also we can give a Socinian no quarter. It is a mere pretence to say, that his doctrine, upon this head, is calculated to promote holiness. For it's obvious and native tendency is, to cherish and invigorate the detestable principle of pride; and thereby to keep the sinner at an everlasting distance from God and true happiness.

5thly, THAT doctrine which lays a solid foundation for *godly sorrow*, certainly tends, in a very eminent degree, to promote the interests of genuine holiness. For we presume, it will not be said, that the least degree of real religion can exist in the soul without some portion of *godly sorrow*. I am certain, that *godly sorrow* lies at the very foundation of true repentance: for thus saith the Spirit of Inspiration, "godly sorrow " worketh repentance unto salvation not to be " repented of." †

Now, let us enquire how this doctrine of JESUS CHRIST's bearing divine wrath tends to produce *godly sorrow* in the heart of a sinner. This enquiry is of vast importance; and yet the profe-

* Rom. xi. 5, 6. † 2 Cor. vii. 10.

cation of it may be conducted with abundance of ease upon evangelical principles.

IN the first place, it must be allowed, that we can never mourn for sin after a godly sort, till once we see, in some measure, it's infinite evil. Without such a discovery of the evil of transgression, we may feel remorse and horreur of mind, such as Judas, Cain and others experienced; but it is impossible we can be acquainted with that ingenuous sorrow which arises from a view of sin as an infinite opposition to the holy nature of God. Now, we have shewn already, that sin never did, never can appear in such an awful and tremendous light, as in the vicarious sufferings of the Son of God. Another circumstance which tends to lay open all the springs of godly sorrow in the soul, is, a realizing discovery of the Son of God, in human nature, bearing the whole punishment due to our sins. Hence, this divine and glorious personage is represented as saying, in ancient prophecy, "I will pour out upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon *me* whom they have pierced, and shall mourn." * The copious effusion of the Spirit, in his illuminating and saving influences, produces that faith in the heart of a sinner, whereby he *looks* to the LORD JESUS as wounded for his transgressions, nay, as *pierced* by them. And this discovery of CHRIST as *pierced* by his

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* Compare Zech. xii. 10. with John xix. 37.

fin is immediately succeeded with a mourning for them in the bitterest manner; "they shall look, and they *shall* mourn." Now, what is this bitter mourning for sin, but that very repentance unto life which the Scripture represents as peculiar to the elect of God?

WE may farther observe, for the illustration of this idea, that all godly sorrow being of an ingenious nature, must arise, in part, from a *sense* of the infinite love of God manifested in our redemption. Hence, the sorrow of the real Christian is free and unconstrained. A sense of the love of God melts the heart into reciprocal returns of love towards him. And never does the child of God mourn so bitterly for sin, as when he feels the highest transports of divine love rising in his soul. Then he gives full scope to the exercise of those generous feelings wherewith he was endowed, in the day of his spiritual acquaintance with the LORD JESUS. And, as a sense of the infinite love of God in CHRIST tends to lay open the springs of godly sorrow, the higher discoveries he has of that love, the deeper sorrow must he feel on the account of transgression. But, where can he have such high views of the love of God, as in the contemplation of the vicarious sufferings of his own Son? Here indeed the *brightest possible display* of that love is presented before his eyes; and consequently, the *strongest possible motive* to repentance arises from spiritual discoveries of the LORD of glory suffering that very punishment which we

deserved to experience throughout everlasting ages.

ON the other hand, the Socinian doctrine upon this head, which represents JESUS CHRIST as a mere man, suffering only in his body, has not the most distant tendency to produce godly sorrow in the heart of a sinner; and therefore, can have no influence at all upon his repentance. And indeed, those Socinians who have any *grain* of honesty left are so far consistent with themselves, that in the representation they give of the sufferings of CHRIST, their great object seems to be, not to affect the sinner's heart with a sense of transgression; but, on the other hand, to rouse his sensibilities at the idea of injured innocence, and to inspire him with sympathy for the worthy sufferer. Hence the *tragical descriptions* which are given of CHRIST's bodily sufferings. Men who paint these in the strongest colours, seem to themselves as if they were attending a tragedy, or perhaps taking themselves a part in the tragical representation. And thus the Socinians will, in spite of what JESUS CHRIST said to the daughters of Jerusalem, "weep not for me daughters of Jerusalem, but weep for yourselves," * labour to inspire men with sympathetic feelings on the occasion of displaying the SAVIOUR's sufferings. This is to pervert the very design of God and of CHRIST in these sufferings; and is a conduct as highly absurd, as it would be for a man to attempt to extract poison from the most salutary

* Luke xxiii. 28.

medicine. In short, the principles of the Socinians lead them only to that kind of repentance, which the sight of a well-acted tragedy might produce. And if they think that the stage is the best school for training men up for heaven, they must be left in the enjoyment of their delusion, till the snare be broken by Almighty grace. For in general, argument has as little effect upon them, as if it were addressed to stone-walls.

We might also illustrate this branch of the subject, by contrasting the views of Socinians with those of real Christians. We observed, that the principles which give rise to godly sorrow in the hearts of the latter, are just views of the infinite evil of sin; spiritual views of God in our nature as suffering for the sins of men, nay, as pierced by them; and a sense of the infinite love of God in CHRIST manifested in our redemption. Now, Socinians are entirely destitute of all these principles; and consequently, have no solid foundation for their claim to repentance. They believe not that there is an infinite evil in sin; they believe not that JESUS CHRIST is GOD, and that he, in human nature, bore divine wrath; and they cannot see the brightest possible display of the Father's love: for their opinion is, that the Father delivered up a mere creature to death.

6thly, THAT doctrine which tends most effectually to excite gratitude will, doubtless, be eminently subservient to the interests of holiness. This is a general principle, which, I dare say, will be deemed incontrovertible. The only thing that needs

illustration here, is, to show that the tendency of the doctrine of atonement is, to inspire the believing sinner with the warmest sentiments of gratitude to God.

In thinking upon this part of the Subject, we may observe, that there are two circumstances, which, in a peculiar manner, tend to penetrate the heart with the liveliest sentiments of gratitude. The first is, the gift which is bestowed; the second is, the manner of it's conveyance. With regard to the first of these, it is evident, that every gift deserves to be gratefully received; but the richer and greater the gift is, proportionable degrees of gratitude will be expected from the receiver. In the present case, the greatest of all gifts is bestowed upon guilty men: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life." * This was a Son of the same nature with his Father; for he was the fellow and equal of the Almighty, possessing every underived perfection and excellence peculiar to Deity. And yet, the same glorious Personage is the wonderful, the infinitely valuable gift, bestowed on sinners by the Father. But for what end did the Father give his Son? Was it to be a king to reign over a world of rebellious subjects, and reduce them to obedience? This object was indeed in the eye of the Father; but before it could be completely attained, atonement must be made for transgression.

* John iii. 16.

And without shedding of blood there was no remission. The Father, therefore, expressed his infinite love to a lost world, not only in giving his Son to be the king of rebellious subjects, but also to be a priest to die for them in human nature. This was the highest possible effort of the infinite love of God. In the vicarious sufferings of the Son of God, we see the very *elevation* of divine love. With great propriety, then, may it be said, that JESUS CHRIST was the first and best gift which God himself could bestow. And if the gratitude of the receiver ought to rise in exact proportion to the infinite value and greatness of the gift conferred, we may see that no man upon earth, no glorified saint in heaven, can, throughout the revolving ages of eternity, show a grateful heart corresponding to the infinite obligations under which he lies. And therefore, it will be the employment of the redeemed in heaven eternally, to rise higher and higher in gratitude: but still they will be infinitely far from paying all they owe in this respect. And even here on earth, the more clear and lively their views are of redemption, through the sufferings of the Son of God in human nature, the more powerfully are they constrained, by a sense of gratitude, to consecrate all the powers of their souls, and all the members of their bodies, to the service of their redeeming LORD. Whatever influence or abilities they possess in the world will be employed in spreading the sweet favour of the knowledge of CHRIST. In short, these words of the inspired

writer are written with the hand of God himself upon the living tables of their hearts: "For ye
 "are bought with a price; therefore, *glorify God*
 "in your *body*, and in your *spirit*, which are
 "*God's*." *

THE manner of conveying any gift also tends exceedingly to awaken and raise our gratitude. If a gift be bestowed grudgingly, or after much importunity and solicitation, more than half the value of it is lost: but if the donor confer it, unsolicited and uninfluenced by any motives but such as his own goodness gives rise to, the *generous manner of conveyance* enriches and ennobles the gift. Never was this illustrated in such a striking manner, as in the case before us. The unspeakable gift of JESUS CHRIST to sinners of mankind, was the effect of the infinite love of the Father; "For God so loved the world, *that* he
 "gave," &c.; so absurd and contrary to all scripture is the sentiment of those who assert, that JESUS CHRIST purchased the Father's love. God, even the Father, was not solicited by any creature, no, not by his *own Son*, to form the plan of redeeming love. That plan originated in his own free, sovereign, good pleasure, independent of all importunity from any quarter. † Now, must not this manner of conveying the most valuable of all gifts operate powerfully upon the generous feelings of the heaven-born soul? Indeed, there is no reasoning against matter of fact. We

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* 1 Cor. vi. 20. † Eph. i. 5, 11. Rom. xi. 33, 34, 35, 36.

know from the instances of the most illustrious saints whose names are recorded in sacred Writ, and also from the testimonies of those who have been most distinguished for real holiness both in the preceding and present century, that the consideration of the free, sovereign, love of God, in the gift of JESUS CHRIST, did, above all others, heighten their devotion.

ON the other hand, if we view this part of the Socinian scheme, we see not only the obligations to gratitude exceedingly weakened, but the very foundations, upon which they rest, completely destroyed. For, in the first place, by this scheme, JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten Son of God, is no more than a mere man. Now, if a gift of infinite value founds an infinite obligation, a gift of finite value can surely lay a foundation for no more than a finite obligation. * Hence it appears, that the real Christian is under infinitely higher obligations than the Socinian. And, in the next place, the Socinian proceeds to destroy the very foundations of his obligations to gratitude, by asserting, that this mere man, CHRIST JESUS, did not suffer in his soul any part of the wrath of God due to transgression. And therefore, if sin indeed deserve wrath, the Socinian must suffer that wrath in his own soul. There is no possibility of avoiding this conclusion, but by emerging out of the *gloomy region* of Socinianism, renouncing all connection with infidels, the *true* and

* THE argument here is founded entirely upon the *value* of the gift.

faithful allies of Socinians, and submitting to the perfect surety-righteousness of the Son of God, as the everlasting foundation of a sinner's hope.

BUT, to complete the illustration of this particular, the Socinian pulls up by the very roots the foundations of his obligations to gratitude, by denying the *freeness* of the gift bestowed. He will not accept of an offered Saviour in the manner pointed out by God. He understands not the meaning of that important declaration, "Ho, e-
" very one who thirsts, come ye to the waters,
" and he who hath no money, come ye, buy and
" eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without
" money and without price." * The Socinian must have his conditions of repentance and sincere obedience of his own production inserted, though the insertion of them should entirely eclipse the *glory* of grace. For the very *glory* of the grace of God consists in it's being freely offered, and freely communicated to the very chief of sinners, to the vilest of the vile.

7thly, In the next place, that doctrine is beyond all question subservient to the interests of holiness, which hath the strongest tendency to promote submission to the various appointments of God, in the course of his providence. If any illustration of this proposition were necessary, it might be observed, that the whole of evangelical holiness consists in conformity to the will of God's *precepts*, and submission to the will of his *providence*. Now,

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* Isa. lv. 1.

that the doctrine of our LORD's bearing divine wrath tends to promote in the saints the highest degree of submission to the will of God, under the most overwhelming distresses of human life, is evident. For the Son of God, at the very time he was employed in drinking that cup of pure unmixed wrath, which filled his holy human soul with horror and sore amazement, so that, *as man*, he knew not what to do, subjected his human will, in this instance, to the will of his heavenly Father. Hence he says, "not my will but thine be done." If then there be any justness in that old observation which hath been proceeded upon in all ages, that example hath more influence upon the human mind than precept, we may certainly see it verified in the case before us. For here is the highest and brightest example of submission that ever was exhibited in time, or ever can be exhibited in the annals of eternity. Here is the Son of the Father's love, that glorious Personage who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, submitting, in human nature, to the wise and holy appointment of his Father's providence. The higher rank and dignity the person who is eminently distinguished for service or suffering, in this world, possesseth, the more powerful and the more extensive will the influence of his example be on the inferior classes of men. For instance, one of the Princes of the Blood, who had signalized himself by carrying his victorious arms into distant countries, would more effectually spread

the renown of the King, and stimulate others to copy after his example, than thousands of inferior rank who were employed in the same business. And on the other hand, if the apparent heir of the crown should either suffer a violent death by the hand of justice, or else, for the good of his Father's subjects, should submit to many temporal miseries, nay, to deep poverty, or to death itself, how would the honour of the law, and the authority of the lawgiver, be vindicated and supported in the one case; and how would the condescension of the generous Prince be admired and extolled in the other? In both, the influence of such an example would quickly spread from one end of the kingdom to the other. Now, if JESUS CHRIST had been a *mere man*, his services and sufferings ought to have proportionable effect on men, supposing them, in their present state, to be capable of feeling the influence of a good example. But if he be considered as God over all and blessed for ever more, the influence of his example in submitting to the will of his Father, in our low nature, ought to be infinitely greater. For that influence *must rise* in an exact proportion to the *dignity* of the person who submits. Nay, by viewing JESUS CHRIST, as GOD, we see a foundation laid for his quickening men dead in trespasses and sins; without which, the example of a perfectly holy man on earth, or even the example of all the holy angels in heaven continually presented before their eyes, would be attended with no happy, no beneficial effects. And if we view JESUS

CHRIST under his mediatorial character, he hath purchased that grace with the price of his blood, which is suited to produce submission in the souls of the redeemed, under the severest trials of life.

ON the other hand, let us consider the moral influence of CHRIST's example, according to the Socinian scheme. He was a mere man, not so holy as to be free from all struggle between reason and passion. The influence of such an example cannot be compared with the influence of an example infinitely purer and brighter; especially if we consider, that the sinner dead in trespasses and sins is disposed to resist the force of all means and motives, till once he is *quickened* by God. After that happy period, he sees the glory and excellence of spiritual objects; and proportionably to the degree of his illumination, he feels the influence of both precept and example. But, the submission of the Socinian, who acts upon pure Socinian principles, is not a rational holy submission, as the word of God requires; it is a blind, implicit submission to a system of irrational and absurd principles, having no existence any where, but in the deluded minds of those who embrace them. Hence, when God's afflicting hand lies heavy upon them, what they call patience is either a morose sullenness, or a Stoical insensibility. For Christian patience, which arises from the faith and hope of the Gospel, they cannot be supposed to possess, as they renounce those very principles upon which an unfeigned faith and genuine hope do rest. For the truth of this remark, I appeal to

every Reader who considers, with any degree of attention, the scheme of doctrine they have espoused. The divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the all-atoning sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST, justification through faith in that sacrifice, and sanctification begun, carried on and completed in the soul, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, are religious articles of which the Socinian has no knowledge. And because he is not able to disprove them from the word of God, however much inclined to it, he ridicules them under the idea of *incomprehensible mysteries*. This was the very weapon to which Julian the Apostate had recourse, after exhausting all the resources which his genius could invent for completing the destruction of the Christians. And if they follow such an illustrious leader, they may, doubtless, expect to share in his laurels! *

As Socinianism, then, doth not suit a man in the days of his outward prosperity, in as much as it *poisons* all his joys by excluding him from the

* HISTORY informs us, that Julian, who entered into the Persian war soon after his accession to the empire, was mortally wounded by the lance of a Persian soldier. Upon which, finding all the ruinous projects he had meditated against Christianity defeated, he received into the hollow of his hand as much of his blood as it could contain, and then threw it up towards heaven with this blasphemous exclamation, *Thou hast conquered me at last, O Galilean*; meaning CHRIST, whose religion he had abjured. For the authenticity of this fact, see Theodoret Eccles. Hist. book 3d. chap. 25. Cassiodorus in Tripartit. Blount in censura celebr. authorum, page 236. And Le Clerc's folio Dictionary on the article Julian.

hopes of a happy immortality, it is equally hostile to him in the dreary night of adversity, by giving him no *present help*, nor any *future hope*.

In the last place, on this part of the Subject, that doctrine which has the greatest tendency to awaken sinners to an apprehension of danger, and to excite in them an attention to the use of all the means of divine appointment for obtaining an interest in the SAVIOUR, is, undoubtedly, calculated to strengthen the obligations to holiness. Now, where can we have such powerful motives for addressing the sinner fast asleep in sin, as those which arise from the contemplation of the Son of GOD, in human nature, bearing divine wrath? What is the meaning of this tremendous scene which is presented to our view? Surely the language of such an affecting representation is, "If such things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If he who was the GOD of glory suffered divine wrath in the low nature of man, when representing elect sinners, what shall become of those who are by nature guilty and polluted? If they are finally found uninterested in the SAVIOUR, must they not appear to be vessels of wrath, fitted by their own iniquities for everlasting destruction? And can any thing tend more effectually to alarm them with a sense of their danger, and rouse them out of their present state of fatal security, than to assure them that they were indeed born under guilt; and consequently under wrath; and that it is utterly impracticable for them to escape

that wrath, but by believing in the glorious SAVIOUR, who died that we might live through him? Upon these principles, the absolute necessity of humble and fervent prayer, of reading and hearing the holy word of GOD, and of meditating deeply upon it, appears in the clearest manner. For these are all means employed by the Spirit for the production of a true and saving faith in the souls of the elect.

ON the other hand, if JESUS CHRIST, in the character of our Surety, did not bear divine wrath, according to the Socinian scheme, then, as we have argued before, it must follow, that our sins did not deserve that wrath. For if, indeed, wrath were the proper desert of them, surely wrath must be undergone either by the sinner himself, or else by his Surety. If neither the one nor the other suffer the adequate punishment of transgression, by enduring the wrath of GOD, it is evident, that wrath is by no means connected with sin; and therefore, the sinner hath no reason to be much alarmed with his present situation. He may sleep on still, and take his rest in sin, as he hath no great danger to apprehend from the pursuit of such a course of conduct. For, say the Socinians, it is but a dream, a mere chimera, to insinuate, that men will be punished eternally in hell, with a sense of divine wrath, for the guilt committed by them in the space of a few days upon earth. And if this reasoning be conclusive, why should the sinner give himself any trouble about prayer, reading, or hearing the word of

God? May not a man be perfectly safe who lives in the habitual neglect of all these? Where then is the holy tendency of this part of the Socinian scheme, of which some ignorantly boast? It's obvious tendency is, to lull men fast asleep in their sins, as we hinted before, and to make them infidels in *practice* as well as in *principle*.

WE are now to deduce some inferences. We begin with mentioning a doctrinal inference or two which deserve deep attention.

I/st, WE may hence see, that if CHRIST's suffering the wrath of God be not only a Scripture-doctrine, but a doctrine which lies at the very foundation of Christianity, it follows, that all those who openly avow a disbelief of that doctrine, divest themselves of all solid pretensions to the Christian character. They may indeed claim the name; but if Scripture be the rule according to which we are to decide, they are entire strangers to the thing itself. And how can it be otherwise? For if man, because of transgression, deserved to suffer wrath in his soul, the justice of God requires, that that suffering should be submitted to, either by himself, or by his Surety. Those therefore who deny the Surety's bearing the wrath of God, do an infinite injury to the souls of men: for thereby, they labour, as much as lies in their power, to transfer that wrath upon the persons who sinned throughout eternity. This is a crime of the deepest die which human imagination can figure: for it is really murdering the souls of men

eternally. Now, if taking away the life of the body be justly considered as one of the most horrid crimes which can be committed in this world, what must murdering the soul be? Therefore, all such dangerous teachers of Christianity are worse than infidels; they are more irrational, inconsistent, and absurd, than even those who treat the whole of revelation as a cunningly devised fable.

2dly, As this doctrine of our LORD's atonement holds such a high and distinguished rank in the Christian system, that without it Christianity cannot exist, we ought to contend earnestly for it in the manner pointed out by God. Men may come to us under the specious forms of piety, prudence and innocence; and yet, by openly denying this doctrine, they plainly show that they are inwardly ravenous wolves. And all their attempts to point out the influence of our LORD's external sufferings upon holiness of heart and life must be fruitless. For the fact is, that all which our LORD endured in this world would have had no effect at all in promoting the salvation of any one sinner, if he had not borne the wrath of God. This was the very substance of the curse denounced against transgression. Therefore, to oppose this idea, and to substitute a chimerical one of human invention in it's stead, is, to place one's self in the situation of the ancient Jews, who, not being able to resist the evidence of Paul's doctrine, *contradicted and blasphemed*.

It is no relief for the Socinian to fly to that rock which hath proved fatal to thousands and

ten thousands, by saying, it is of no consequence at all what a man's religious principles may be, provided he lives a good life. This is the pestilential principle which infidels wish to inculcate and disseminate through all the dark region possessed by them. And indeed, as far as they succeed in gaining over men to act under the influence of this principle, they will proportionably strengthen the kingdom erected by Satan on the earth. And we may consider this as one of the master-pieces of Satan's policy, for retaining guilty men in a state of vassalage to him.

BUT this principle is replete with absurdity. It supposes, in the first place, that men who are entire strangers to sound principles may yet be led to perform very good actions. Who would think that men pretending to argue, would be guilty of such a gross abuse of the faculty of reason given them by God! Was it ever heard since the beginning of the world, that the man who sowed his field with hemlock reaped an excellent crop of wheat or barley? Does not the harvest always partake of the quality of the seed which is sown?

AGAIN, the holding this principle necessarily supposes all distinction between truth and falsehood entirely destroyed; for what is the difference between them if the latter have as powerful and extensive an influence on moral conduct as the former? This is indeed a levelling scheme; and when once the adversaries of the Gospel have their hand in, they wish to show what execution they are able to do. Nay, far.

ther, nothing can be more evidently contrary to the general principle laid down by JESUS CHRIST, "First make the tree good, and then," but never till then, "shall the fruit be good. E-
" very *good tree* bringeth forth good fruit; and a
" corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." *

IN short, if this pernicious principle were admitted, that our life might be good however false our religious views were, it would clearly follow, that the great Apostle of the Gentiles laboured in vain, while he preached the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST to so many heathen nations at the peril of his life. What was his great object in the pursuit of this course? Was it not to recover men from their polytheism and idolatry, and, under divine influence, to turn them to the knowledge, worship, and obedience of the one true and living God? But if this principle, the futility of which we are exposing, had any real foundation in truth, Paul might have spared all his pains; because a Polytheist or Idolater, who paid religious worship to thirty thousand Deities, if, through the influence of worldly motives, he abstained from the commission of gross immoralities, might be just as good a man as one who worshipped God, through CHRIST, under the influence of the eternal Spirit. Those men who are capable of digesting an absurdity of this kind, do not seem to be many removes from Atheism itself.

WE are, in the next place, to mention some

* Matth. vii. 17, 18. xii. 33. Luke vi. 43.

practical inferences. This we have, in a great measure, anticipated, by what we have said on the third head. We shall only then observe, in so many words, that we may hence see

1st, THAT the doctrine of JESUS CHRIST's suffering the wrath of God ought to be believed. The more important any doctrine in the Christian system is, the more clearly the necessity of our believing that doctrine appears. For the very design of God in the revelation of it is, that it may be credited by us. But then the faith which gives credit to it is not the effect of a bare fluctuating assent of the mind to principles of truth, nor of human persuasion, nor of the highest exertions of the natural powers of the soul, while under the guilt and dominion of sin; but it arises solely from the saving operations of the Holy Spirit upon the soul. This faith, and this alone, is that which purifies the heart, works by love, and overcomes the world. Every other kind of faith is the effect of a strong delusion, calculated as much by the devil as infernal policy can invent, for keeping the soul secure in sin. Hence, true faith never stands for a barren and inefficacious speculation; but whether it be considered as justifying the sinner, as sanctifying or comforting the believer, it always hath a most powerful influence in transforming the heart and life.

2^{dly}, WE may hence see, that the Christian ought every day to contemplate the Son of God as bearing divine wrath, with transports of adoring wonder! Never was there such a wonderful scene pre-

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presented to the eyes of men or angels in time, and never will there be such a scene beheld by created intelligences throughout eternity, as the sufferings of the great Emmanuel God in our low nature. Let every Christian here say, *I will now turn aside and see this great sight ;* * and in the contemplation

* SOME Divines of great eminence have thought, that when Moses saw the bush burning and not consumed, Exod. iii. 2, 3. there was an emblematical representation exhibited to him of the Son of God, in human nature, bearing divine wrath, in the room of the redeemed. And indeed, there are several important circumstances which seem to render this interpretation highly probable.

In the first place, it is perfectly evident, from the context, that the glorious Angel, who appeared to Moses in the bush, was the Son of God, and second Person of the adorable Trinity. Hence he is styled in the fourth verse, *The Lord*, or, as it is in the original, *Jehovah*, which is one of the incommunicable names of Deity. In the sixth verse, he says of himself, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." In the seventh verse, he is again called *Jehovah*; and in the fourteenth verse, he is distinguished by the wonderful name, "I Am that I Am." It was under the commission and by the authority of this glorious Personage, that Moses went to Pharaoh, and insisted on the deliverance of the children of Israel.

2dly, LET us consider the reason why the Son of God was distinguished by the appellation of an *Angel*. All sound Divines agree, that this name was given to him, to intimate his *future mission* into the world, for the purpose of expiating the guilt of our sins. And all his personal appearances to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, to Manoah and others, may be considered as a certain prelude to his *future incarnation*. Of consequence, when he appeared at this time to Moses, under the character of the Angel of the Covenant, his intention was, to lead forward the views of Moses to the *memorable period* of his

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of it, let my soul be filled with the keenest indignation at sin, and deeply penetrated with a sense of the *Saviour's astonishing love!* While others wonder and perish eternally, let me wonder and praise!

3dly, If the soul of the Son of God was exceedingly sorrowful when he stood in the place of the re-

assuming our low nature, and in that nature satisfying for our sins.

3dly, This will be still more evident, if we consider, that the word here rendered *bush*, properly signifies a bramble-bush; which is a poor, despicable thing, and when dry, ready to be consumed with fire. Was not this bush, therefore, a lively emblem of the human nature, which is in itself *essentially poor*, and, on the account of sin, ready to be consumed by the justice and holiness of God? Yet this nature, poor as it was in itself, was, in the fulness of time, united to the second Person of the adorable Trinity. On this, as well as on other accounts, we read, that the Son of God, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor," 2 Cor. viii. 9.

4thly, FIRE, in sacred Writ, is often considered as an emblem of the divine indignation. Hence, when God descended in awful and terrible majesty on mount Sinai, to give the law, and to point out the punishment due to the violators of it, we are told, "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire," Exod. xix. 18. xx. 18. and xxiv. 17. Hence, the law given on that occasion, was emphatically styled, *a fiery law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2.; and, in allusion to the fire now seen on mount Sinai, when God comes to execute dreadful judgements on the workers of iniquity, "a smoke" is said to ascend "from his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth to devour," 2 Sam. xxii. 9. Psal. xviii. 8. We have similar representations of God, when engaged in this awful work, Psal. i. 3. and xcvi. 3. Isa. lxvi. 15, 16. The same allusion is preserved, and the same important truth taught, when our LORD is represented as coming to the last judgement in *flaming fire*, 2 Thes. i. 8. And the torments of the wicked in

deemed, ought not their souls to be exceeding sorrowful every day, while they think of their sins as the sole procuring cause of all the inconceivable sufferings to which he, in the infinite depths of his love, submitted? "Blessed," says our LORD, "are they *who mourn*" for sin, and under a sense

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hell are frequently represented, both in the old and new Testament, by fire; because they will chiefly arise from a sense of the *divine indignation*. The divine wrath, therefore, represented by the bush *all in flames*, would have speedily consumed the human nature, had not *God himself* dwelt in that nature. Moses therefore, now saw by faith the *eternal word*, as made flesh and *dwelling* among us; and doubtless, he *now* "beheld his glory," "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

THIS last sentiment seems to receive confirmation from Deut. xxxiii. 13, 16. There Moses, in the nearest views of death, is represented as blessing Joseph among the other tribes. And the benediction he bestows, under divine influence, upon the posterity of this venerable Patriarch, is expressed in these very remarkable words, "Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the good-will of him who dwelt in the bush;" or, as some eminent interpreters render the last expression, "for the *good-will* of *my dweller* in the bush," of *my God*, who appeared to me as dwelling in human nature, and, consequently, as *my Surety* and *Redeemer*.

5thly, It is well known, that the LORD was wont, in ancient times, to comfort his people, when reduced to the greatest extremities, with spiritual views of the incarnation and sufferings of JESUS CHRIST. And this conduct plainly demonstrated, that the promise of the Messiah's appearing in our low nature, was the foundation of all the other promises of GOD, and a *blessed earnest* of their actual accomplishment. Hence we read, "All the promises of GOD are, in CHRIST JESUS, yea and amen," that is, certain in respect of their accomplishment to

of the hidings of God's face, "for they shall be comforted." Here he plainly represents a daily mourning frame of soul, as characteristical of all those who are born of God.

4thly, We may hence see, that one important part of the design of our LORD in enduring such inconceivable sorrow, while representing a world

all who truly believe, 2 Cor. i. 20. Now, the Church of God was at this time involved in the deepest distress; and nothing could be more suited to ascertain Moses of her *complete deliverance* from the bondage of Egypt, than spiritual discoveries of the Son of God suffering in human nature. For if God were to bestow such an unspeakable gift as that of his own Son, to suffer and die for his people, how would he not with him also freely give them all other things? If he gave the greater, would he not also give the less? And hence also it appears, that upon these principles, the common interpretation of the LORD CHRIST being with the Church in the hottest furnace, is established beyond all controversy. For the true reason why he vouchsafes his blessed and gracious Presence to his people, under the severest sufferings of human life, is, because *he actually bore the punishment of their sins*. This gives him not only an indisputable claim to deliver them from an eternity of suffering in hell, but also, to sweeten the bitterest ingredients in their present cup of affliction.

AND what confirms me in all this, is, that the covenant of grace is evidently introduced to the view of Moses in the sixth verse, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. Wherever this expression *God of Abraham* is used in the old Testament, it is always intended to remind the Reader of the Covenant of Grace, which is the sole foundation of all God's *gracious dealings* with guilty men. See Cocc. on the place; Span. Eccles. Hist. vol. 1. page 319; Owen's Meditations of CHRIST's Glory, page 55. Edin. edit.; And Hill's Sermons.

of elect sinners, was, that they might have proportionable degrees of joy throughout eternity. His soul was made exceeding sorrowful with a sense of his Father's wrath, that their souls might be made exceeding joyful with the light of the Father's countenance.

5thly, WE may hence see, that Christians are not henceforth to live to themselves, but to the praise and glory of that LORD, who loved them, and gave himself for them. Let them bear about in their mortal bodies the dying of the LORD JESUS, that the life of CHRIST may be exemplified in them, and manifested by them. While others talk of motives to virtue drawn from political, worldly, or selfish considerations, let the Christian not only speak of the irresistible motive of the love of CHRIST, but also act daily under it's influence. Hereby he will appear to be a living epistle of CHRIST, known and read of all men.

Finally, THIS subject suggests to the sinner, who continues under guilt and condemnation, that nothing awaits him, but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; a growing sense of which will be eternally felt by every soul of man, Jew or Gentile, that is found finally unconnected with our adorable Redeemer. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will you die, O house of Israel! To day, saith the Spirit, if ye will hear CHRIST's voice, then harden not your hearts!" Do you, from a consciousness of your exceeding great and aggravated guilt, and of your own utter inability

to contribute in the smallest degree towards your own recovery, cry to God, "Turn thou us and we shall be turned! Draw thou us with the cords of love, and we will run after thee!" *Amen.*

F I N I S.